



MEDIA RELEASE

City of Medicine Hat - 500 First Street S.E. - Medicine Hat, Alberta, T1A 8E8 - (403) 529-8071

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PARKS DEPARTMENT ACHIEVES 550 DAYS WITH NO LOST TIME CLAIMS

Medicine Hat – The City of Medicine Hat's Parks and Outdoor Recreation department reached a safety milestone in 2008.

In addition to operating with no lost time claims for 550 days, the Parks department was recently recognized by the City for having the most improved safety record for 2007. The department's lost time frequency rate went from 6.9 in 2006 to 0 in 2007.

"This achievement by our Parks and Outdoor Recreation department is a testament to the ongoing commitment our employees and corporation have to workplace safety," says Jason McConnell, Occupational Health and Safety Supervisor for the City.

In February 2007, Parks and Outdoor Recreation started to review its number of personal injuries from 2004-2006. The department then worked with the City's Occupational Health staff to develop the following strategies to reduce the number of injuries and lost time accidents:

- Enhance job orientation so staff know the risks associated with various tasks.
- Work with the City's Occupational Health staff to ensure Parks' employees are using proper lifting techniques and movements.
- Emphasize safety at every opportunity.

"Parks' staff met the challenge, formed a self-directed work team with a focus on personal injury reduction, came to appreciate the benefits of a safe work environment even more and they have contributed to this noteworthy achievement," says Rodger Vizbar, General Manager of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

There are 110 employees in Parks and Outdoor Recreation, who ensure the City's diverse urban landscape is developed and maintained to the highest possible standards. This includes the maintenance of trails, flowerbed operations, tree and shrub beds, grounds, natural areas, outdoor recreation amenities, campground management, cemetery operations, and outdoor facilities.

The City of Medicine Hat is also participating in North America Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) Week May 4-10 by hosting a special safety presentation by Carl Potter entitled "Who is Responsible for Safety?" on May 9 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Esplanade Studio Theatre. The public is encouraged to attend.

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For further information, please contact:

Jason McConnell
Occupational Health and Safety
Supervisor
City of Medicine Hat
(403) 529-8359

Rodger Vizbar
General Manager, Parks
and Outdoor Recreation
City of Medicine Hat
(403) 529-8312

Jody Lamb
Corporate Communications
Manager
City of Medicine Hat
(403) 502-8071

